

THE

Nassau Literary Magazine.

VOL. XIII.

NOVEMBER, 1852.

No. 3.

SUPERIORITY OF MIND.

AMID his Author's works, man stands his noblest mechanism. Divine in his origin, yet mortal in his formation, he at once approximates the glory of the one and dignifies the other. Superior to organic creation around him, and suitably constructed for the maintenance of his station, he has enshrined within his matchless structure a soul that gives it all its vigor, and reflects from its dark mirror the image of its immortal archetype—more pure than its refined habitation, more expansive than the theatre of its action, and superior in power to the objects of its conquest. Thus armed with the strength of mental panoply and prowess, and glowing with the impress of Divinity, nature forms the throne of its power, and the universe with its mysteries hangs trembling in the grasp of his thought. Capable of reflection, and of apprehending at once the grandeur and sublimity of design, and the beauty and perfection of execution, he only of animated nature is able fully to comprehend and appreciate the object of his being; to enjoy the glowing scenes around him; and to contain within himself a mind of happiness which life cannot exhaust and death but refines. Destitute of mind, what is man but the prey of brutal power, the slave of fear, the creature whose nature knows no law but the gratification of its unrefined desires, and is harassed by continual dangers from the superior delicacy of its formation? Deprived of his intellect, to what purpose is his intrepid spirit? Where his noble and sublime conceptions; the guidance of his daring intentions; the objects of his boundless intelligence; the incentives to manly exertion; the enjoyment of his own fanciful creations? Devoid

of mental power, what do we see in him to admire, thus rendered a sensual mass of weak mortality, with no achievements to mark the glory of his life, no monumental records to transmit his name, no hope to penetrate the mystic veil of death, and find assurance of eternal being? For mind is man's only guarantee to immortality. But when to his physical organization is added this intellectual engine, he is so far elevated and ennobled above his former state of imbecility, that not less sudden and astonishing is the change than when light sprang from Deity's command, casting its scintillations in ten thousand ways athwart the young earth's gloominess. Unsullied and refining in the purity of its source, it throws its brilliant radiancy like some lone star in a waste of sterile clouds over man's deformities, and makes them admirable. Undiscernible as it is active in its influence, we admire the cause but from the magnitude of the effect. Unfathomable in its profundity, intangible in itself, unknown but by its effects, who can define it? Boundless in its aspirations, and able alike to sound the profoundest depths of knowledge, and to soar in the heaven-restricted empire of ideality, who can prescribe limits to its wanderings, or imagine the infinitude of its powers? Able as well to scale the cloud-built battlements which crown Olympus' head, as to linger in the classic groves at its base; to view undaunted the dread array of warring elements, as to gaze upon the calm scenes of gentler nature; to ascend in bolder than Dædalian flight towards the bright home of day, as to sport in the solar ray that glistens on the unruffled wave; to hear the rough tones of nature's baser instruments, as to woo the soft whispering of sylvan melody; we are made to wonder at the bold extent of its achievements, while we stop to admire the pleasing versatility of its faculties, and the same uninterrupted success attendant upon its efforts. Unconfined to the low and narrow sphere of certainty and fact, it beats with a daring wing the distant realm where imagination reigns, attains the utmost confines of creation, and hovers on the separating wall of time, anxious to burst its fetters and revel in the mystery of eternity. Baffling alike chemistry in the detection of its ingredients and the minutest scrutiny of observation, Philosophy has left it mysterious and uncompounded as the essence of its Creator; and Poetry, with all the expression of its language, but defined the "dome of thought, the palace of the soul." No matter what or how unknown may be its constituents, its

influence is not less powerful, nor its possession less valuable to man. It is an endowment richer than the stone of dreaming alchemists, puissant as the word of Jove, and more enduring than his cloud-girt throne. No matter where we find man, whether amid the gayeties and refinements of the city, or threading his way in savage solitude through the forest wilds; whether his intellect be illumined by the strict discipline of education, or shrouded in the gloomy mantle of ignorance and superstition; mind, ever inseparable from him, is the cause and enjoyment of his exaltation in the one condition, and, even in the degradation of the other, it cheers the dull monotony of his life and displays creation subservient to his will. Quick to perceive, and powerful to act, it has led him over obstacles seemingly insurmountable, and difficulties have vanished at its touch with the rapidity of magic: for it is resistless as the unfettered wind, expansive as its own endless duration, untiring in the mightiness of its power, and illimitable in its resources as it is indefatigable in its exertion. Philosophy has tasked itself in mythical investigation; Science in systematizing the intricacy of knowledge; Poetry exercised its richest faculties: but mind remains unweakened and unimpaired. Its force seems to increase with its use, with Promethean imperishability. In addition to these triumphs over physical force and the abstrusities of nature, it has asserted an influence not less extensive and astonishing over the mental world. The despot, enthroned in tyranny, may exact respect and obedience from the servile sycophants of his favor; but intellect—pure, unassisted intellect—though destitute of kingly majesty or the tyrant's sceptre, exerts an influence perhaps more absolute, though at the same time voluntary and unforced. In reviewing the achievements of genius, who has not felt himself wrapped in insignificance, and lost in the contemplation of its stupendous power? Who has not shrunk within himself before the forceful reasoning and torrent gush of eloquence which mind rolls resistlessly on mind, like the lava stream which sweeps opposition, and bears its unobstructed course to the margin of the deep? Thus has every age knelt at the shrine of intellect, from the first dawning of its glory upon Eastern rudeness and barbarity, to the present age of mental illumination, where its light is fast spreading to a remoteness from the scene of its birth which once baffled conception.

HAPPINESS NO DREAM.

EARTH has been the scene of many revolutions; wars, just and unjust, have often shocked high heaven; fanaticism has often exiled reason from the world, and constituted passion destiny. But by whom have these revolutions been directed and achieved? By whom have these wars been planned and executed? By whom has fanaticism been preached and embraced? By men in search of happiness! Happiness! this is the goal, a desire to attain which is the offspring of mind, of intellect, and characterizes man. All orders of beings below him are the blind recipients of that listless, negative content, a capacity for which mere consciousness would transfer to stone. All above him, from the affinity of spirit unto the essence divine, have entered into a fruition self-active, self-producing. The one is attendant upon simple animal life, and derived from the direct volition of Him at whose bidding light came forth, smiling and rejoicing, while chaos and old night shrank shivering back into their primitive nonentity. The other, independent alike of matter and physical vitality, has its origin and end in the incorporeal, the tangibly unreal.

Between these extremities man plays his part—disdaining that beneath as unworthy a passing thought, but striving after that above him with a Stoic's steadiness and a madman's zeal. The universality of this principle is the foundation of the philosophy of history. Without it, those who would reward merit know not on whom to confer praise; for from it, as an axiom, must the present argue touching the motives of the past. Thus only can the threefold relation of motive, action, and merit be rightly comprehended and adjusted. Action, then, does appear natural to man and essential to happiness. Did wealth and luxury, yea, and honor accrue to him from the operation of the Atheist's law, necessity, wealth would be but poverty, luxury starvation, and honor a blank! His enjoyment must be of that higher kind without which, he is told from within, time would be a burden, life a load, death a terror, and immortality a curse! Why then, with mathematical apathy, do mystified metaphysicians, the professed expounders of mind, so lower the aim of our existence, so scandalize the destiny of our race, by destroying the only incentive to exertion, the only test of worth? They do

not indeed deny the prevalency or intensity of the cravings, for of these they are convinced long ere they discard these reasonable deductions from experience, and launch anchorless and chartless into the shoreless ocean of probability, from whose depths genius alone can pluck the pearls of truth. But threading clumsily the labyrinths of cheerless abstraction, with an obtuseness of feeling almost clogging to their intellect, they define happiness as freedom from care and from pain. Still, could the theorists who thus aspire to compute the guerdon of a life well spent, experience one of the heart-spasms which await the just and godly unto death, they would not exchange it for an eternal realization of their own fond visions. Their ideas of the perfection of mind are little elevated above the fond dreams of the enthusiastic schemer who, in the absence of every obstruction, would have a world of machinery move on without a jar. How mad must men be to make infidels of us all! Man a mere machine! Who says it? who believes it? who could live and know it? What! he whose presence the monarch of the forest flees; at whose approach the monster of the briny wave seeks refuge in his native depths; the accents of whose voice the reeking victor of the skies shuns with a flapping of pinions, a shriek and wild flight; he for whom all else of nature seems created; to whose every exertion she herself is hand-maid; to subserve whose purposes of advancement her four great elements have been chained to the oar of labor and wrought into all possible combinations; he who was originally clothed in the image of his God, and to whose physical frailties the Son of God fell heir; he a mere machine! Strange that the capstone of the handiwork of Omnipotence should be an automaton! And yet there are those who, to calm a conscience violated and ill at ease, would strip him of his inborn dignity, throttle the throbs of his approximate divinity, deny him affection, sympathy, aspiration, volition; and in lieu of all these, claim for him—what? rest! rest!! A living man at rest! The presumption of the godless dare not assert such an anomaly. And yet, when the chafing spirit has been unshackled; when the soul is freed from the incumbrance of clay, who, committing to earth's keeping this tenantless tenement, can bespeak for the tenant rest? No one! Observation and conjecture answer, No one!

Notwithstanding all this, however, the history of learning affords, alas! too many instances the tendency of which, as an argument, is in the opposite direction. Shelley and Byron, the most gifted and sensitive of all England's bards, while they sacrificed life to the immortality of literary fame, struggled mightily to reconcile their full, poetic souls to the thought of annihilation. But whatever their boasts to the contrary may be, the drooping pathos of settled despair which trembles mournfully through their lines of direct blasphemy, tells, in accents too sadly plain, they knew their creed was false. Yet, though in the whirl and blaze of their brief careers, their most enthusiastic admirers find much to pity and condemn, still, could simple truth supplant the glare lent by renown, many who now shun them for their vice would weep on contemplating the blight of generous folly. Indeed, it seems the misery of genius, that while its faculties expand to the full enjoyment of heavenly perfection, it must be tied down to the sickening insipidities of life, and even tantalized by the mock glories of earth. Time, however, whose "chain-gang" of captives is swollen by soul-damning prejudice itself, secures to the gifted few the peaceful, undisputed sway of passion and of intellect, so that, despite the malicious scurrility of envy and grovelling ambition, they may well feel proud and reliant; for though they move through life hated and taunted by the heartless, still, if they recoil from what is cold, forbidding, and debased, and court the beautiful and sublime, they may trust posterity for fame and God for their recompense. Individual eccentricities may mark the man of thought; the earnestness manifest in all his actions may cause some to pronounce him a fool, and others a knave; but, when in the holy stillness of the midnight study he becomes enamored of truths, to the perception of which inspiration has elevated him, his heart takes courage and gives utterance to sentiments whose ardor challenges indifference, and to whose impetuosity the coolest, most systematic opposition is as naught. And in due season will the world—yes, that world so often styled unfeeling—pay grateful homage at the shrine of worth. For, when the triumphal car of genius unadulterated shall glide smoothly over the crackling railway of human hearts, all—all will feel

"That goodness is no name, and happiness no dream."

M. E. N.

STRICTURES UPON CICERO, BY THE AUTHOR OF THE BRITISH SPY.

THE author of the British Spy, in one of his letters upon modern eloquence, uses the following expressions: "It is true that at school I learned, like the rest of the world, to lisp 'Cicero the orator;' but when I grew up and began to judge for myself, I opened his volumes again, and looked in vain for that sublimity of conception which fills and astonishes the mind; that simple pathos which finds such a sweet welcome in every breast; or that resistless enthusiasm of unaffected passion which takes the heart by storm. On the contrary, let me confess to you that, whatever may be the cause, to me he seemed *cold*, and *vapid*, and *uninteresting*, and *tiresome*: not only destitute of that compulsive energy of thought which we look for in a great man, but even void of the strong, rich, and varied coloring of a superior fancy." A substantial ground for the maintenance of this opinion, or a just reason why such a conception should have been formed by Wirt of this distinguished Roman cannot, as he admits, be readily assigned by himself, nor can any be imagined by us. Hazlitt has beautifully remarked, that "Fame is the recompense, not of the living, but of the dead; the flame that burns upon its altars being kindled from the ashes of great men. Fame is not popularity; the shout of the multitude, the idle buzz of fashion, the venal puff, the soothing flattery of favor, or of friendship; but it is the spirit of a man surviving himself in the minds and thoughts of other men, undying and imperishable. It is the power which the intellect exercises over the intellect, and the lasting homage paid to it as such, independently of time and circumstances, purified from partiality and evil speaking. There have been those who have written and acted upon principles which cannot be said to belong exclusively to any age, or any nation. Reasoning in advance, and not in the rear of events; regarding not only the present with its fleeting occupations, but also the anticipated developments of the future, they have based their efforts upon foundations as enlarged and as enduring as the ever-increasing capabilities of the human soul. These, and these only, are they who will survive the scrutiny of time; and while entire generations of petty aspirants are swept away before the searching eye of truth, will ever remain as brilliant

examples of successful literary action, as faithful guides to young adventurers in quest of that whereon to build lasting reputation. There must be *inherent merit*, in order to secure the perpetuity of any performance. Who are the judges of this excellency? The entire body of enlightened, learned men on the earth; men of every nation, capable of forming unbiased judgments, and of discerning the true gold, in its native bed, from tinselled ornament which, when examined and applied, instead of increasing in brilliancy, loses its lustre and proves utterly valueless. Universal consent, then, being the certain test of merit, when centuries have rolled by in their hurried march, consigning to oblivion whatever has appeared of a local, contracted, or deficient character, and we still see mankind cherishing the same high regard for an author, are we not to conclude that he is indeed possessed of that which entitles him to respect and attention? And shall we not sit with pleasure beneath the rays of that lamp of knowledge which, kindled far back, still shines brightly on? Such a man and author is Cicero, whom mankind in every age have regarded as the gifted orator, the statesman of enlarged views, the eloquent lawyer, and the distinguished philosopher. Yet the author of the *British Spy* denounces his character and writings as *uninteresting, cold, vapid and tiresome*. Let us first consider Cicero as viewed in the light of a philosopher; let us notice the relation in which he stood morally to the rest of his fellows; the remarkable principles he advocated, and then ask ourselves whether he and his productions seem to merit the slighting notice of the author just alluded to. Many and just have been the encomiums passed upon his extensive and profound learning, which, coupled with his rich experience, fitted him for the discharge of every office, be its importance what it might. Naturally of a contemplative disposition, he was wont frequently, when "*defensionum laboribus senatoriisque muneribus liberatus*," to retreat for a while from the active scenes of business, and, amid the quiet shades of his beloved Tusculan villa, indulge the inclinations and natural disposition of his mind in the careful study of Grecian Philosophy; in analyzing the creeds and principal motives of ancient distinguished men; in making many advances in science, and in adopting for himself those views which have conspired to render him so remarkable a personage in the eyes of all subsequent generations.

These sentiments, we all know, are many of them truly surprising for the age in which he flourished—an age, it is true, renowned for its proficiency in many literary departments, yet lamentably devoid of that knowledge which is positively necessary in order to form any just basis for the superstructure of all high and pure philosophy—absolutely requisite to obtain correct and proper conceptions of the nature and distinctive attributes of the Deity. Hence, a period defective in its systems of morality; for where the teacher who can advance a pure and spotless creed, save him whose mind has been enlightened by wisdom superior to that which usually pertains to man in a state of nature? Systems of mythology on every hand raised their hydra heads, peopling the mountains, the groves, the seas, with their peculiar divinities, the offspring of human invention, suited in their characters and appetites to the vices and quasi virtues of a pleasure-loving and, in the main, a godless people. The effects of these were seen in the institutions and regulations of the day; in their Saturnalia, Fasti Dies, Bacchanalia, and numerous other ceremonies of a similar degrading character. The human mind, ever prone to error, readily embraces that which is most congenial to its vitiated tastes, and naturally seeks out and adopts those creeds which savor most of license or indulgence. Such was the state of religion in the Roman empire when Cicero flourished. In what a remarkable contrast does he appear before our view! It is always most interesting to mark the struggles of a great mind as it labors to burst those shackles which ignorance, prejudice, and circumstances have imposed upon it, and seeks to discover some bright hope of better days, some nobler rock than the drifting sands of a delusive and vain philosophy. Remember, that within his soul had dawned no brilliant ray of truth from the diadem of the God of light. Revelation, with majesty and power, had unfolded none of her precious and priceless themes. In that book he had never learned his destiny, but was wandering amid the countless mazes of conjecture, uncertain, trembling, guided only by the faint light of nature and the deductions of his own unaided reason. Plato and Socrates had discoursed of a vague immortality; yet these master-minds had vanished as set the stars beyond the bosom of a stormy and troublous sea, in the gloom of a dark and endless night. They had hoped for future life, yet from that

bourne no voice had returned to confirm their followers, not one exhortation to encourage them as they fearfully awaited the approach of that last and momentous crisis, when they must in reality take a "leap," a terrible "plunge in the dark." No assuring word from those "sweet fields beyond the swelling flood" was found unfolding the plan whereby that blest abode could be reached; and although their leaders had remained firm in the article of death, although one of them calmly maintained his opinions, and cherished them with ardor, even with the poisoned chalice near his lips, still they *knew* not that these bright hopes had been realized. Besides, such sentiments had been embraced by few, very few; for the majority were so engrossed with the sordid avocations of daily pleasures, so lost to every consideration save such as tended to the furtherance of their vitiated appetites and lusts, that they regarded only the enjoyments of the present, carelessly leaving all else to *Fate*, and offering their vows upon an altar dedicated to an "Unknown God." Despite the clouds of error and superstition which beset his pathway, we see Cicero despising the gods of the mountains, and heeding not the threatened wrath of the powers of the deep; knowing that all these were but the creations of human minds, as suggested by blind fear, or instituted by priestcraft to be palmed off upon the superstitious rabble. He now deduces loftier attributes, which appeared more consonant with and gratifying to the cravings of his intellectual, disciplined mind; striving to comprehend the nature of *one Being*, who might appropriately be styled the Supreme Ruler of the Universe. Disregarding the false and degrading doctrine of the transmigration of souls, and discarding that narrow-minded philosophy which would teach that the soul and body were inseparable, living and perishing together, we find him embracing, and supporting with all his powers, the *Immortality of the Soul*, thence drawing consolation of the most pleasing character, or educing arguments in favor of increasing activity in his duties, as well as encouragement for the employment of purer morality in the every-day conduct of life. How intensely interesting to mark the workings of that mind under these circumstances—its hopes and fears! We see it as a pilgrim upon an unaccustomed way, with uncertain steps treading a comparatively blind and novel road, now staggered by conflicting systems which, although unsatisfactory,

had still been rendered hoary and sacred by the implicit belief of ages; now drawing arguments from the majesty of the human mind and its manifest superiority; now investigating the characters and opinions of the most distinguished philosophers, until, completely absorbed with his theme, he exclaims, "But why say more? Thus have I persuaded myself, and such is my belief, that since so great is the activity of our souls, so remarkable their memory of past events, and their sagacity in view of the future; so many arts, so many sciences, so many discoveries, that *that nature cannot be mortal which comprises them all.*" In view of death he adds: "O glorious day, when I shall go to that divine company and assemblage of souls! when I shall be free from this turmoil and impure state! If I err in this, namely, because I believe the souls of men to be immortal, I willingly err; nor do I wish that this delusion, in which I take such delight, should be wrested from me while I live." Observe the beauty, confidence, and strength which are evident in these expressions. Can these emotions of his soul, these conjectures, these hopes, these arguments, these attempts to grasp the highest truths which can be comprehended by mortal minds, be deemed *vapid, cold and uninteresting*? Read his Tusculan Questions, his De Senectute, his Paradoxes, or his De Natura Deorum, and then see if you will desire to lay aside these productions, and unite with the author of the British Spy in denouncing them as *tiresome*. On the contrary, will you not rather find them invested with a chain of fascination, an interest deep and absorbing, which seizes upon the soul and enchains its closest attention? Yes, as a *philosopher* he stood like a lighthouse upon the shore of a hoarse and restless sea. The dark clouds of mythology, the bedimning mists of complicated rituals and ceremonies at once unmeaning and degrading, might for an instant intercept those rays; yet once more they flash abroad, shedding their effulgence far and near, rendered more brilliant by the thick darkness which broods over the waters. Cicero then, considered in connection with his philosophical works, must ever be a personage of interest and attraction. We cannot expect to find in his productions the sentiments of a profound theologian, for he possessed no Bible. There was no Gamaliel in his day, at whose feet he might sit and learn the law. But it is surprising what a current of high-toned morality, studied deference for the

majesty of the Deity, and a continual presentation of wise maxims and moral injunctions for the guidance of mankind in general, in their every-day transactions, pervade the whole of his moral treatises. True, the *virtues* of Cicero were not the fervent piety of a Christian age; still his religious views were far, very far in advance of those which were universally prevalent at that period. There is a purity in his teachings, a beauty in his expressions, a philosophy in his opinions, and an elegance of style, all of which commend themselves to the attention of the reader with a peculiar and happy effect.

Let us now regard him as an *orator*. In this capacity has he been perhaps most admired, and his efforts most applauded. So incorporated have his name, his deeds, and his words become with the honor and reputation of his country, that they are to us one and inseparable. We think not of the Senate Chamber, but the shades of Scipio, of Cato, of Lælius, and of Cicero rise before the imagination; we mark their commanding persons, and seem to hear those words of impassioned eloquence as they are uttered, with powerful effect, before that august assembly. Read his orations against Cataline, and see in that deep feeling, that fervid enthusiasm, that daring manner, and those fearless denunciations, how great was his devotion to the interests of his country, with what watchfulness did he guard those interests and employ every means to defeat the traitor, and secure the continued safety of the nation. Yet the author of the *Spy* tells us that he appears destitute of that resistless enthusiasm, of that unaffected passion which takes the heart by storm. Cicero not impassioned and pathetic! How fell his words when, with burning tongue and convulsed lips, he revealed to his countrymen a deeply laid and deadly plot, which was at that very instant fulfilling its mission of darkness "in media Suburra"—a conspiracy whose aim was to blast every fair hope of Roman honor and Roman renown; threatening the disgrace of lovely maidens and staid matrons, the pride of every State; the murder of ripened manhood and the insult of the hoary head. Did he then seem "*cold and vapid*?" Far from all this. He saw the imminent peril of the city. Conscious that a short delay might secure the destruction of the entire country; knowing that his own reputation and life were in common involved with the honor and safety of the nation; arousing his every energy, he hurled forth with

impassioned voice, vehement eloquence, and mighty power, those terrible denunciations which have conspired, in so large a degree, to render him immortal as an *orator* and a *guardian of liberty*. The oratory of Cicero gathered its thousands around the rostrum of old ; nerved the people like the tocsin of war ; and, with the clear, clarion tone of liberty and truth, disheartened the enemies and pointed only to public scorn the traitors ; while it cheered on to renewed exertion and increasing vigilance the friends of Roman supremacy. We

"Should have seen him in the Campus Martius,
In the Tribunal, shaking all the tribes
With mighty speech. His words seemed oracles,
That pierced their bosoms ; and each man would turn,
And gaze in wonder on his neighbor's face,
That with the like dumb wonder answered him :
Then some would weep, some shout, some deeper touch'd
Keep down the cry, with motion of their hands,
In fear but to have lost a syllable."

Nor were his displays mere bursts of passion. In his other orations we trace an originality of thought, a boldness and perspicuity of conception, a force of presentation, and an accurate reasoning, all of which unite in characterizing him as the subtile logician, the accomplished rhetorician, and the lawyer of no common order. Not the justice of Shakspeare,

"With eyes severe, and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances,"

but the dignified, the courteous, the refined, the persuasive Cicero, the successful orator. His support of the Manilian law, and defense of Murena, are favorable specimens of his more elaborate style of eloquence. To grace of mien, and a superior delivery, he added a full and sonorous voice and a ready flow of language, always mastering his subject before presentation. The style of his composition has been declared to be too studied ; yet who would not rather behold a due regard to arrangement and those nicer particulars which careful attention alone can point out, than a loose and rough presentation, depending upon the spirit of the moment to infuse life and interest ? The former ever remains a perfect model, while the latter perishes with the occasion which gave it birth. There may be such a slavish regard to the order of words, such a continued endeavor after a regular succession of musical ca-

dences—of long and short syllables—that the power of the thought is entirely lost in its superficial dress, and the weakness of the author's mind is easily perceived. Never, however, does Cicero attempt to robe trifling thought in this gossamer veil, or endeavor to dignify trite expressions by the employment of ad captandum sounds, which may please the ear but will never reach the heart. In him, thought and language mutually commend each other. Take his *De Oratore* as a model of his literary efforts in this department. Is there not a rich vein of thought, a full command of historic reference, an aptitude of expression and purity of diction, and a power of careful analysis pervading the entire work? Thus it is with all his productions. Without the severity of an Aristotle, or the concise diction of a Longinus; without the stern and often evasive satire of a Persius, he is still the chaste, forcible, impressive and deeply engaging writer. He has effectually shown what dignity resides in the Roman tongue, what scope it possesses, and what charms eloquence can add to truth and justice. It has been further urged by the author whose criticism we are now considering, that Cicero was not possessed of a fancy which exhibited itself in rich and varied colorings. We will not now pretend to determine what constitutes a rich and varied fancy, yet we will venture to assert that there was no writer of ancient times who was, in a greater degree, able to enlist the sympathies of an audience by the novel, appropriate, and striking introduction of beautiful metaphors and chaste comparisons; more gifted with that happy faculty of brilliant wit; more pleasing in the vivacity of his colloquial powers, or who could “ad libitum” portray in so attractive and romantic colors the tamest and most familiar objects of nature. In confirmation of these remarks, we might point the reader to many passages in his works. See, for example, how beautifully he depicts the occupation of the aged husbandman in his *De Senectute*. In what an inviting and natural manner are the changes of the seasons, the budding of plants, the calm and satisfactory engagements of sowing, reaping, pruning, grafting, and the quiet endearments of a country life delineated. Scenes are presented of well-ordered farms, lovely landscapes, and handsome gardens teeming with rare exotics and most luxuriant vegetation; and that with such masterly skill that a Shenstone might well have coveted a

sight. What appropriate images are employed to represent the periods of youth and old age! Why multiply instances? Numbers will at once occur to the mind of him who is at all familiar with the works of Cicero. With reference to his *style*, little need be said, for in this point of view he occupies, perhaps, the first position among Roman authors. Explicit, clear, and engaging, his works form models, in many respects, for the imitation of literary aspirants of the present day. In him we behold an *exponent* of much, if not all that was noble and praiseworthy of that age. In this light he does indeed form an interesting personage. Emphatically the man of letters, classical, urbane, connected by his personal acts with all the great events of the period in which he lived, surely he who formed the centre of attraction there, upon the rostrum, in the legislative halls, and in private circles among so many gifted minds, should not now appear to us "dull." When contemplating his character and perusing his works, it is like hearing once more, in all their harmony, the strains of that harp which long ago charmed in a distant age, reviving a thousand pure and ennobling recollections of those days

"When the freshness of thought and feeling were such
As they never again can be."

Generally lucid, calm, and full of feeling, Cicero enlists in a quiet manner the sympathies of the reader, and delights him with pleasant thoughts, interesting statements, and instructive presentations. Yet there are times when, like a mountain torrent whose pent-up waters overleap every barrier, his soul, fired with some important matter, or quickened in all its energies by a crisis where momentous issues are at stake, gives utterance to emotions in thought and language of true sublimity, and fills the mind of the reader with astonishment and admiration. Then it is that we trace that "resistless enthusiasm of unaffected passion which takes the heart by storm." Cicero was neither the brawling brook nor the turbid stream, but was indeed the clear and mighty river, moving onward in silent majesty. Whether, therefore, we consider him as the *philosopher*, advocating, with efficiency and interest, the immortality of the soul; the *senator*, defending with zeal the honor of his country; the *conversationalist*, with a circle of wise and eminent companions, discussing questions of moment and importance

amid the cool shades of his Tusculan villa; as the *orator*, the guardian of Roman liberty from foreign innovation or domestic intrigue; as the *author*, of a cultivated taste and refined fancy; or the polished and able *advocate at the bar*, he is, in each and every capacity, the prominent, the attractive personage, the great exponent of whatever was noble and exalted in his period; whose acts command the study of all, and whose writings commend themselves, in every point of view, to the perusal and attention of every man of letters. PUBLIUS.

THE CRUSADES.

MANKIND have in various ages been seized with unaccountable impulses urging them on to the strangest acts. These impulses seem suddenly and at once to take possession of a whole nation or age, prompting in their minds the same thoughts, and causing them to act in the same manner. Often have a people been roused by a cause apparently totally inadequate to the commission of great deeds, the effects of which are seen and felt even in the present day. Thus was it with the Crusades, beyond question the most memorable of the events of the world's history. They were caused by none of the ordinary passions that animate mankind. No desire for conquest brought the western chivalry, like the Grecian phalanx and the Roman legion, to the walls of Jerusalem. No love of gain caused the Crusaders, like the conquerors of Mexico and Peru, to traverse seas, to march through wild and desert lands, to endure the climate, the fatigues of war, the attacks of hostile tribes, whilst in search of imaginary El Dorados. They were not animated by the love of country, nor did they attempt to convert the world to the religion of the Bible at the points of their lances. One only motive warmed every bosom, one only passion nerved every arm. To rescue the Holy Land from the hands of the infidels; to tear down the crescent from the heights of Mount Olivet, and plant again the cross on Calvary, were the sole aims of the undertaking. For this, millions deserted their home and country, their friends and possessions, to die in a foreign land; for this, the bravest of the warriors and chiefs of Europe left wealth

and power, kingdom and heritage, wife and mistress, to whiten with their bones the plains of Palestine. When once commenced, all the powers that stimulate mankind were brought to aid the illusion. The eloquence of the preachers of the crusades stirred the heart of Europe; poetry and romance lent their powerful aid, ambition and love assisted; the hope of pardon for past sins urged on multitudes; all combined to swell the tide of enthusiasm. The songs of the troubadours, those minstrel knights, even now exist, to show that every influence that could rouse mankind was brought into action. And thus roused and animated, the chivalry of Europe poured forth to battle for the Holy Sepulchre; and Palestine, already celebrated as the scene of the greatest deeds ever performed in this world, became the battle ground, where the East and the West contended for two centuries for the mastery.

The Crusades have been looked upon as a mere outpouring of fanaticism, as a useless and terrible effusion of blood. But that blood was not poured forth for nothing. The Crusades were and are of incalculable benefit to Europe. Their immediate effects may have been hurtful; they drained Europe of its treasures; they wasted the lives of hundreds of thousands of its warriors. But they produced much good; they loosened the foundations of the gigantic frame-work of feudalism which had so long restrained mankind; they introduced many of the arts and sciences of the then cultivated East among the ignorant nations of the West; they communicated an immense impulse by the prodigious migration they caused; they produced an intermingling of the different races and families of mankind, whereby each received some of the acquisitions of the others; and lastly and chiefly, they have been the means of the preservation of civilization and of the true religion.

By the Crusades the on-rolling wave of Saracen invasion was checked, until its force was broken, and it could no longer sweep on, even when the opposing barrier was withdrawn. Imagine what would have been the result if the Saracens, flushed with victory and animated by their fanatic devotion to their new religion, had once crossed the Bosphorus, and with unbroken strength poured into Eastern Europe. If it had not been for the superstitious reverence of Europe to its religion, and to the mandates of its spiritual leader, such would have

been the case. The Saracens, instead of being restrained in Palestine for two centuries by the combined force of the western chivalry, would have pushed on, easily overthrown the weak and luxurious Byzantine empire, and then rushed on into Europe. This latter was in no state to receive them. Just emerging from the ruin which had been brought upon it by the overthrow of the Roman Empire, it was little prepared for another invasion. The Saracen tribes were united, flushed with victory, and enthusiastic in the propagation of their new religion. They had just overrun the fertile and wealthy provinces of Asia Minor, and, supported by their richness and abundance, and animated by their fanaticism and victories, they would have been invincible against the different nations of Europe taken singly. And these nations were enemies of each other, jealous of their neighbors, constantly quarrelling among themselves. They would have looked with joy on the overthrow of one of their rivals, never thinking that they could be hurt by it. Long after, when the Turks invaded Europe, Francis I. entered into a treaty with the Turkish Sultan for the overthrow of his rival, Charles V. If at that time, when political science had advanced so much, such a thing was thought beneficial, what would have been done before? It was only therefore by superstition that the banded strength of the West could be brought against that of the East, and even then the latter prevailed; but it was so weakened by the contest, and Christendom had so much time to prepare for the final struggle for life and death, and civilization made so great an advance, that the tide of invasion was rolled back when it finally broke on Eastern Europe.

But what would have been the results if the Saracens had overrun Europe? They at that time were more civilized than the western nations; they were no longer the wild desert tribes who destroyed the Alexandrian library. Communication with the refined though effeminate nations of Asia, whom they had subdued, had effected a total change in their manners. At the time of the Crusades they were the farthest advanced in literature and science of any nation in the world. If they had overrun Europe, would they not have imparted their knowledge, their literature, their civilization, to its rude and ignorant inhabitants? True, they might have done all this. The condition of Europe might have been temporarily benefited.

But what would have been the result? Look at the countries under Mohammedan sway, and answer. They will serve as an illustration of the effects of superstition on not only science and literature, but on every thing. It is a corroding, all-destroying element that must be removed in order to save the substance. The Mohammedan nations are stagnant pools. Education there is none; freedom is destroyed; power is wrested from them; there is no literature, no knowledge. Superstition stalks like a pestilence over lands formerly the fairest and most cultivated under the sun. Its touch is corruption, its presence death. Through the whole extent of country under Moslem sway ruins are every where visible; decayed monuments of past grandeur every where rise up. Where now is the gorgeous poetry of the East, so often *imitated* by the greatest minds of the West; where the Arabian literature formerly so celebrated? Gone with the other remains of their former magnificence. Under the forced excitement of enthusiasm, their literature, their science, their power alike sprang up into an ephemeral existence, and then disappeared. Nor can the desperate struggles of the Turkish Sultan again restore life to the dying body. The poison must be removed, and it has existed so long, and compounded itself so entirely with the other elements, that its eradication is impossible. All of these evils are due to the religion of those countries. And this would have been the condition of Europe at the present day had it not been for the Crusades. Instead of the literature of Germany, the science of France, the education and knowledge of England and America, we would have had the universal stagnancy of Turkey. Much then is due to the Crusades; the blood of hundreds of thousands of the chivalry of Europe was not poured forth uselessly. Wonderful, but at the same time the most simple and most effective, was the means used by Providence to preserve the only pure religion from destruction.

L.

"MAN WAS MADE TO MOURN."

Of the numerous ballads and delightful fragments of true poesy which have emanated from the pen of Burns, none occupy a higher place in the esteem of the literary world than the above. Destitute of that magnificent display of words, that nice adjustment of smoothly flowing sentences, and that sublimity and grandeur of circumstance which usually attract, it captivates the soul by qualities far different. There is pervading the entire piece a plain, unaffected simplicity of expression, a mournful earnestness of sentiment, causing the words to appear as if arranged rather by the pulsations of the heart than by the calculations of the brain, combined with grief apparently sincere, and expressed with unusual pathos, for "man's inhumanity to man," which render it beautiful and affecting to an eminent degree. In short, this poem bears deep feeling and sentiments sprung directly from the well-springs of the heart plainly stamped upon every verse, upon every line, and upon every word. No thirst for fame, no love of literary eminence, no insatiate desire to become the "admired of all admirers," nor any jealous rivalry of competitors for the laurel wreath, could have inspired the poet with expressions so true and so moving, for the feelings of a man old in years and misery, who, fast tottering into the grave, gives, for the first time, free vent to the long pent-up emotions of his heart. A picture so vivid and affecting could have been produced by naught else save a bitter experience of life's woes. The trying ordeal through which Burns passed is well known. Endowed by nature with a genius brilliant as it was versatile, he was elevated with almost lightning rapidity from the position of an humble plough-boy to the pinnacle of literary eminence. Courted and caressed by the noble, the fashionable, and the learned, revered and loved by the lowly and poor, he shone for a while the polar star of literature, and dazzled all by the brilliancy of his intellect. His fall from this enviable position was no less sudden than his elevation. But a short time before banqueted from day to day in palaces, he was now pointed at with the finger of scorn by the veriest pedagogue, and stared in the face by want in her most ghastly form. Such being his lot, was it

strange that he pictured the darkest side of life, or can this poem be interpreted as aught else than the outgushing of a heart writhing beneath the stings of poverty and contempt?

Posterity has given to merit its due reward, and Burns is now numbered among earth's most gifted sons. Much, however, as we admire the genius and character of its author, as also the beauty of the poem itself, we cannot agree in the sentiments therein expressed. That "man was made to mourn" is a sentiment which may, perhaps, be palliated when uttered, as it was by Burns, from the depths of despair, although, in connection with that other sentiment,

"Man's inhumanity to man
Makes countless thousands mourn,"

it is but the stepping-stone to misanthropy. When, however, uttered by one who has never experienced the desolating and heart-sickening sensations of misery heaped on misery, it becomes an impious libel upon nature and "nature's God." For what was the material world, with its manifold beauties and inscrutable mysteries, its complex and varied mechanism regulated by an unseen hand, its revealed and hidden resources yielding a bounteous plenty, and promising to yield till time itself shall be extinct—for what was it, for what these and other bounties innumerable and infinite, created? Nature herself, in whom even the infidel believes, replies, For the enjoyment of man. Gifted with faculties admitting of almost infinite development; with affections affording the most exquisite pleasure; and withal a will, a high moral power, by which he is enabled to eradicate or suppress his baser passions, man does not appear to us a being made to mourn. On the contrary, he presents himself to our minds as fitted, in every way, to attain and to enjoy terrestrial happiness in its highest state. Over and above all, last and greatest blessing of his nature, he possesses an immortal soul, to raise which into regions of uninterrupted bliss, or to sink it to the depths of eternal woe, is in his own power. That no man passes through life without having experienced its "ups and downs," without having been buffeted by the rude storms of adversity, as well as kissed by the gentle zephyrs of prosperity, neither can nor should be denied. Neither can it be denied, with more reason, that by far the greater part of his unhappiness is due to himself,

and him alone. By none, except the fatalist, is it argued that man's path through life is irrevocably traced before he himself has entered the world; that every shade of sorrow and light of joy, and each successive period of time at which they shall cross this path, are immutably fixed by the Author of our being. Such a creed makes man a mere walking automaton, a curious and ingenious piece of mechanism, blindly obeying his destiny without any volition of his own, either for or against, as an inanimate body obeys an impulse. Surely this raises the human above the brute creation only so far as it excels in the beauty and ingenuity of its physical organization. Man's unhappiness is due rather to the evil direction of those talents with which he is naturally endowed; to the perversion of those high moral qualities and keen sensibilities which constitute a part of his original being; and to his own obstinacy and wilful depravity, than to any fatality attending him. To what such sentiments as those contained in the above poem give rise, when expressed by a man of genius, is well worth consideration. Such an one, whilst he commands the respect and admiration of many by whom his worth is justly appreciated, has ever in his train a crowd of servile imitators, the would-be poets and poetasters of their age, who imitate him not from any inherent sense of his talent, but because he is acknowledged by the world to possess genius. To such as these the miseries of man offer a fruitful theme upon which to expend their inexhaustible stores of empty grandiloquence and unmeaning bombast. They lament in strains, horrible and discordant as the yells which echo through the infernal regions, the fated ills "that flesh is heir to," ignorant or unmindful of the execrable insult which they offer to their Creator. To class the author of this poem with men such as these, or to attribute to him like motives, would be injustice the grossest and most palpable. He spoke from the heart alone, and this poem will be ever cherished and admired by his friends as a truthful and beautiful expression of the emotions which swelled his soul.

* N I N E V E H .

THE restless energy of the present generation has left untried no means to advance the arts and sciences. Each day develops new theories, and the practicability of those things which were considered impossible. But this same spirit does not confine itself solely to the advancement of these theories; it has sought, and still seeks a wider range. The spirit of discovery, that eager longing after the unknown which led Columbus to a new world, still inspires the human breast. Not alone content with revealing to the world the mysteries of newly explored regions, it would uncover the rubbish and remove the mould with which ages have invested the monuments of the past. Animated by this desire, and inspired alike by tradition and legend, Layard sought the ruins of Nineveh. Here he toiled on alone, surmounting difficulties that would have appeared invincible to a spirit less bold; and as each day brought to light the ruins of that once mighty city, who can imagine the feelings awakened at the thought of his success? No broken columns or ruins of magnificent temples, no triumphal arches glorious in their decay, no crumbling walls were there to mark the site of that once glorious capital of the Assyrian empire. So literally fulfilled was the prophecy of the Scriptures, as regards its utter desolation. Not even the hut of the shepherd, or the tent of the Arab were there to relieve the solitude; for the superstitious fears of the wandering son of the desert conjured up many an unearthly visitant to this lonely spot, and as the evening twilight gathered thick about, every breeze that sighed seemed to him the wailing of a spirit accursed. Nor could he even dream that where the footsteps of his camel fell, once rose the towers of Nineveh. Here rested in their weary retreat the "ten thousand;" yet the shifting piles of sand, and the vast mounds that covered the plain, spoke not to them of this voiceless city. And as the muffled waters of the Tigris glided silently on, they spoke not of the many barks and the boundless wealth which had once been borne upon its flowing tide. Although, for a time, the despair of its people and the prayers of the many that ascended to heaven, together with the repentance of its rulers and the appeal of the prophet, averted its foretold doom, yet the uplifted arm of the Almighty's ven-

geance was soon to crush it, and involve it in utter ruin. That city, founded by Nimrod the great hunter, whose glory was perpetuated by the achievements of Ninus and Semiramis, whose wealth exceeded even the most fabulous tales, rich in her gold and purple, became the prey of the spoiler, and from that time she ceased to exist. Thirty centuries have passed away; empires have risen, and their glory has departed; conquerors have deluged the earth with blood, and even their names have passed from remembrance. The world itself has been enveloped in the grossest darkness. The light of Christianity has dispelled that gloom, and brought us to the present, the golden age of the world. And now, unmindful that the sands of Time have been ebbing so rapidly away, the light of a new era has burst upon the long-forgotten Nineveh. What emotions pass rapidly through the mind as is pictured before us the world of the past! How strikingly illustrative of the character of its people! How fitting the luxuriousness and gorgeousness of its palaces to the effeminacy of their inhabitants. We still have before us a remnant, a sad wreck of its former greatness. Those colossal images, with their frowning features, guard as of old the palace gates. In these rude sculptures, every where to be found among the ruins of Nineveh, we have a distinct idea of their religion. With them they were the symbol, the type of some unchangeable power. Invested with their ideas of majesty and sublimity, these huge masses give us a faint conception of their emblems of divinity. Could life be breathed into the cold rock, and those solid lips give utterance, what tales would greet the ear! Unmoved, they have gazed alike on scenes of joy and sorrow. Past them have swept the pride and pomp of royalty, the glittering panoply of war, the triumphal procession, and the riotous soldiery of an impious king. The result of the explorations of Layard intimate conclusively that the citizens of Nineveh had reached a degree of enlightenment and refinement far surpassing that of the age in which they lived. The walls of the palaces were decorated with the most beautiful paintings, the rich coloring of which ages have not taken away. The general character of these show, that although they revelled in luxury and ease, the warlike spirit of the early founders of the empire had not entirely passed away. The hand of the artist delineated the kings going forth to battle, the martial conflict, the victory,

and the captive kings following their conquerors in triumphal march. The art of sculpture was brought to a high pitch of perfection. Graceful figures, cut in the cold marble, seem almost to breathe; while the delicacy and beauty of their vases, and other ornaments, cannot be excelled. The untiring explorations of Layard have thrown open to the world fresh emblems of the past, and the grandeur of its earliest empires. What a lesson it teaches to the busy and active world of the present day! Did the Ninevites ever think that so soon almost every trace of their power and glory should be obliterated? Yet no city of the present day rivals her former wealth and power. When thirty centuries more shall be numbered among the past, and the "wheels of Time" drag heavily along, perhaps not even the smallest mound will mark those places whose wealth and magnificence equal the cities of the ancient world, and whose streets are ever thronged with the busy tide of human life.

E.

THE MASSACRE OF THE ALAMO.

ACTION connected with valor, propelled by conviction, and modified by virtue, is the true insignia of merit. It is the spur of the human will, the pearl of the intellect, and the direct countersign to renown and glory. By its influences the property of ignorance has been confiscated, the impracticability of Paganism has been partially demolished, and the necessity of States has been acquired. This quality of merit is not predominant in human nature. Though the strenuous efforts of duty may create an artificial motive, or the desire of gain kindle in the soul an imaginable flame of earnestness, nevertheless incidents have happened that claim the regard of the wise and esteem of the good: valor has had applications, conviction has had exponents, and virtue has had votaries. Instances rise before the eye of the imagination in all the vivid reality of existence; the volume of the past is pregnant with applications and teem with the fertility of events. Reflection transports the senses of the imagination to the magic ground of Thermopylæ, but the senses of reason point with generosity and respect to the scenes of our own interests. Emotions of love rise within the soul

of patriotism, and praise, mingled with pride, has opened the channel of expression which has portrayed, "in letters of blood," the memorable massacre of the Alamo. Causes must be examined before effects can be substantiated; motives must be analyzed before actions can be lauded.

In the year eighteen hundred and nineteen, Texas was ceded to Spain by France, and in eighteen hundred and twenty-one we find it a colony of Mexico. Inhabited to a great degree by Americans, they disdained to acknowledge dependence on such a government. The first encroachments on their reserved rights made their spirits boil with indignation, and their souls of freedom seek for retaliation. The promise that had beguiled them was now denied, and a citizen imprisoned for the presumption of demanding fulfilment. Superiority in power and affluence could not restrain "the might that slumbered in a freeman's arm;" wealth did not entice the passions; but "she stamped her strong foot and said she would be free." They declared their independence; much was the blood that testified their sincerity, and many were the martyrs that died in the cause. The fume of the blood that was spilt in the Alamo still scents the Texan plains, and the groans of its martyrs are still heard on its hills.

The Alamo is situated in an old Spanish town, on a small but beautiful river bearing the same name, San Antonio. Nature had lavished her charms around its precincts, but now cruelty had stained the face of fertility, and bloodshed had tarnished the prospect of beauty. Forty thousand Mexicans, supported by a government of silver, besieged the fortress where one hundred and fifty adopted or voluntary Texans were garrisoned, aided only by the government of the heart, the ammunition of the soul—valor. These noble Texans, unrecognized by other nations, sustained the attack of these barbarians for two successive weeks. Though danger, dressed in the garb of famine were in their midst, though impossibility seemed to raise its huge front before them, yet courage strove and famine "fled as from the glance of destiny," and impossibility seemed to vanish before their eager eyes with supernatural rapidity. Cold despair found no retreat within their warm and heroic souls. The finger of valor still pointed to the star of hope which gleamed through the mist of desolation and destruction. Time seemed to steal in their circle, but action con-

quered it, and it vanished with the speed of lightning. No Ægian shield, with magic influence, protected them; no angry phantom of Achilles, aided with its terrible countenance; no Joshua to stay the order of nature to convenience. Self-reliance was the genii of their only resort. Bravery and patriotism allure the fantastic imagination, and excite emotions of the highest expectations; but the idea of disadvantages calms this excitement, and subsides this "dreamy passion" into the calm of reality. Nevertheless, amidst all these negatives, determination still prompts and firmness still animates. They were at last overpowered by numbers, which resulted in the death of all. They scorned the idea of capitulation: it would have been Spartans kneeling to Persians, Romans yielding to Goths. The death of heroes they sought, and not of mercenaries.

The principle of merit is not so much in action as in motive, for the savage has murdered thousands without the thought of good; but at the same time action exhibits sincerity. A voluntary good is the true standard of virtue, and when found never fails to meet satisfaction. Compulsion arrests the idea of freedom and stupefies the soul with disinterestedness; whereas recompense generally produces effeminacy and self-interest, and abases the virtue of independence: meanness is the result of the former, and the desire of gain is the object of the latter. Civil government, without the aid of instances, would substantiate this fact, and it is amply verified in human nature; nevertheless, illustration confirms and supports with stronger evidence. These Texans, prompted by a conscientious conviction, heard not the vicious voice of avarice, but they defended a home where liberty might not breathe the contaminating air of despotism. Glory was the dagger that entered their hearts and flowed their blood, the point of which is yet red with the blood of patriotism. Chivalry, love, honor, and religion itself were the immaculate virtues they defended. To die is easy, but to die for something of advantage is hard. Gradual extinction or accident are the only modes of death that some can countenance. Advantage to posterity was the cause of the death of these men. Laurelled heroism lay weltering in its blood in the Alamo, but a short time after it rose and triumphed on the plains of San Jacinto.

What forms of men do we see? What actors do we behold conspicuous in the dreadful tragedy of the Alamo? Col. Travis

at the head, animated by every motive to cherish the spirit of liberty, whose soul was made warm by the genial influences of his own native State, (South Carolina,) and which yet retained its heat in this gush of human blood. Col. Crockett, the bravery and originality of whom excite admiration in the breasts of all. His best friend was his rifle, which was still in his grasp when death conquered him; and a smile beamed on his countenance from the thought that he had done his duty; and well did he verify the maxim—

"How oft, when men are at the point of death,
Have they been merry!"

Bonham, a name honored and regarded with reverence by all Texans. His actions proved his prowess, and will tell to the remotest generations that Texas fought to be free. James Bowie, celebrated for his love of chivalry. He was no ideal Ivanhoe, but his actions were reality. He left a peaceful and respectable home in Maryland, and volunteered his services in the Texan revolution. It is true his face was not forged to Puritanical length, yet his heart was overflowing with "the milk of human kindness." He carved his way to the Alamo by his own ingenuity, but his knife was too short to gain the victory.

These men died no felons' death; and when the names of those who denounce them shall have been forgotten, the names of Travis, Crockett, Bonham and Bowie will be still living with freshness in the hearts of their countrymen.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER AN INTERESTING WRITER.

WORDS have been styled pictures of thought; and the analogy between a word and a picture is indeed striking. A picture is a delineation in colors of a real or ideal scene; so a word is a representation of an existing or imaginary object. Again, the degree and quality of beauty possessed by a picture varies with the artistic power of the painter; so language assumes an elegance or expressiveness correspondent to the taste or force with which the pen is wielded. This comparison opens to view several distinct sources of pleasure afforded by an able writer. He portrays the character of his age, and historical knowledge is

either revived or imparted. He charms us by the peculiar beauty of his style. Lastly, he delights us by the ideas he unfolds, whether they be deductions of imagination or reason. The worth of the literature of a country is, for these obvious reasons, strictly dependent on the number and versatility of the gifted minds which have contributed to it. No country of modern Europe has given to the world so many able writers, in so many departments of literature, as England. Previous to the Danish invasion, her Alfred had won for himself a high place in the world of letters. From that time to the present day, cycles of authors have adorned successive ages by literary productions unique in style and sentiment. In the language of a celebrated writer, "No sooner does any class of composition, any school of literature decline from its period of highest fertility, than another springs up as rich, as living, as energetic as the former." English literature thus presents a field of knowledge diversified in its appearance, yet complete and symmetrical in all its parts. But in order to realize the elegance of the parts taken separately, and thus discover the relations existent between them and the beauty of our literature as a whole, we must carefully avoid favoritism. Great reasoners, like Barrow and Locke, are noted for clearness and depth of thought. Shakspeare rests his reputation on the originality of his ideas, and his happy way of embodying them in language and illustrating them by striking imagery. Chastity of style, warmth of feeling, and graceful ease in describing familiar characters and scenes, have acquired for Addison and Goldsmith the love of the world. But if any person, admiring Locke as a philosopher, should make him his ideal of literary excellence, he would never be charmed with the speech of Mark Antony, or listen in imagination to "the clock that ticked behind the door." To obtain a clear view of English literature, we should institute a comparison between the different schools into which our great writers have been grouped. When we have thus determined the peculiar merits and defects of the several schools, and the relations they sustain to each other, we should examine, side by side, the members of each school, and assign to each his relative grade. For both these reasons the works of Geoffrey Chaucer deserve our regard. He belonged to the first great school of English literature. Scholars eminent for their acquirements also assure us that he far surpassed all his cotemporaries as an exponent

of his age, as possessor of an elegant style, and as an unfold-
er of clear and beautiful thought. These points we have already
defined as constituting an able writer. When we compare him
with the heads of other schools, we find him deficient in argu-
ment and daring conception, but almost unequalled as a de-
scriber of rural scenes and rural sounds. The touch of his pen
seems to transport you to some fairy land where birds sing sweet-
ly, rivulets glide along gently, and flowers of varied hue "en-
liven and regale the scene." But a poet is alone competent to
describe the richness of Chaucer's imagery, or tell how great
was his love of nature in its ten thousand aspects, and how
touchingly he represented them all in verse. Propriety demands
that we should leave the consideration of Chaucer as a poet to
those who have the ability to handle it. But other sources of
interest are attached to Chaucer. He was not only imbued
with the spirit of poesy and possessed of a rich and delicate im-
agination, but he was a delineator of his age and a master of
the English language as it existed at his day. It shall be our
humble aim to show, in the rest of this essay, what a valuable
writer Chaucer is to the student of English literature, merely
on these grounds. Two things are necessary to make the works
of a literary man a faithful exposition of his times. He should
write at an interesting period in his country's history, and should
be a public-spirited man, so as to give a true picture of it. The
age of Chaucer was one of the most noted in the early history
of England—the reign of Edward III. Then it was that Chi-
valry, that great predominant feature of the Middle Ages, existed
in all its beauty, and wielded its most ennobling influences over the
popular mind. The splendid triumphs of the British arms have
also made that age illustrious in the annals of England. The
great battle of Crecy, where the Black Prince played so gallant
a part; where the English archers, wrapped in sunshine, shot
their dry arrows in the faces of their foes, whose quivers were
all wet, and whose sight was obscured by a passing cloud, stands
among the greatest victories of England. It was also an age
of mental activity. The shrewdness and good sense so charac-
teristic of the Teutonic race was waking from the lethargy of
the Middle Ages. It had not yet emerged into the clear light,
or obtained a command of its mental powers sufficient to detect
existing evils and apply the proper remedies; but the people
knew enough to enable them to discover that many things about

them were wrong, and that more active strides should be taken in the path to happiness and safety. They knew enough to know their ignorance, and be sensible of the evils it had imposed upon them. Dissatisfaction with existing acquirements and existing institutions was the popular feeling. This was especially the case in religious matters. The age of Chaucer was the dawn of the Reformation. The Romish Church still possessed the power, but many, very many, had directed their attention to the Protestant religion; and not a few, convinced of its life-giving power and heavenly origin, adopted it at the risk of their lives. Such was the age of Chaucer; an age replete with interesting and important events; an age which will never cease to be remembered while England heaves her bosom above the ocean. Chaucer was an able representative of this celebrated age—in every respect a man of his times. He fought on the sunny fields of France, and touched with calm yet severe irony the licentious priests of his day. John Wickliffe was probably an acquaintance, for they were both followers of "Time-honored Lancaster." But whether he was or was not a friend of the great predecessor of Luther and Melancthon, it is impossible to say with accuracy. Certainly, his writings show that he loved in secret, if he did not openly profess, the doctrines of the great English Reformer. But Chaucer was not only an able exponent of an age dear to every Englishman: He was master of a beautiful style, and there are many reasons why the student of English literature should give his works a perusal merely to understand the language he used. Chaucer found not the English language as we find it, complete in all its parts, with a word at hand to express every idea suggested to the mind. It was then a barbarous jargon, destitute of words to indicate delicate shades of thought, and withal so rough that it could not, of itself, be smoothed into verse. But with all these obstacles in his way, Chaucer succeeded in giving melody and spirit to our hitherto harsh language. This he did partly by the power of his splendid imagination, which strung rough words together in such a way that they assumed an elegance they never previously possessed. But the beauty of his style is due in a greater degree to the introduction of a vast number of foreign words. The countries of southern Europe speak languages which are mainly derived from the Latin. The Romanz—a dialect marked by this peculiar fea-

ture—prevailed for a long time in the countries bordering the north-west side of the Mediterranean. It was to songs composed in this tongue that the troubadours of the Middle Ages attuned their harps. Wandering from castle to castle, they disseminated those beautiful lines which will ever remain to attest their taste and mental power, as well as the capabilities of their native tongue. It was from this language, now in its decline, that Chaucer drew some of his foreign words. The Italian, which also evinces its Roman origin, had at that time reached its highest fertility and elegance. The age of Chaucer witnessed the appearance of several distinguished men in that part of the literary world, whose names will never perish as long as genius is admired. Dante died only seven years before the poet's birth, and Petrarch and Boccaccio fifty years after. Chaucer visited Italy, and was probably acquainted with Petrarch. It is not therefore strange that he should have weaved into the rough language of his native land flowers gathered from the Italian fields of literature, especially as they reminded him of his friends in the sunny south. Those words which Chaucer introduced have mostly remained, with slight modifications, in our language until the present day; and the scholar should strive to become acquainted with the manner in which our poet linked them to our original Saxon. We have now brought forward inducements sufficient, we think, in quality and quantity, to prompt every lover of English literature to peruse the works of Chaucer. He lived at an interesting age, and entered into its spirit and portrayed it most clearly in his poetry. He possessed an imagination which threw a charm around rough but weighty words, and introduced others to express delicate shades of thought where none such existed in our native Saxon; and he drew them, too, from dialects remarkable for their softness and beauty. Thus his language, though quaint, is exceedingly melodious, considering the era in which it was written. Then his poetry is beside so beautiful in itself, that it alone would richly repay us for its perusal.

"Sounds of vernal showers
On the tinkling grass,
Rain-awakened flowers,
All that ever was

Joyous and clear and fresh, thy music doth surpass."

Ages have passed away since Chaucer penned his poems. The English language, then a rough jargon, has become the soundest, if not the most melodious of modern dialects. Poets have breathed into it the soul of inspiration; orators have touched it with the fire of eloquence, and led on the minds of men to mighty deeds; and the minister behind the altar, with the help of a heavenly power, has through its agency led many to listen, believe, and reap everlasting joy. It has accomplished the most gigantic results already, and its future influence bids fair to outstrip its past. Is it just, is it kind, we ask in conclusion, to neglect him who first smoothed down its roughness, and prepared, in a certain degree, the way to such noble results?
C.

Editor's Table.

READER, are you a collegian? If so, memory will delight to recall those scenes where you have revelled in the joys of youth, with a mind free from the crushing weight of worldly responsibilities, and with a brow unfurrowed with care. As in a landscape, "distance lends enchantment to the view," so time will soften the asperities of the early scenes of life, and give fresh coloring to those beauties which in youth escaped notice. Thus to you, reviewing college life through the shadowy vista of years, time will conceal the wearisome monotony of college duty, and display the joys and sweets which are there. Or have you spent those halcyon days elsewhere, engaged with other duties, and tasting other and perhaps not less sweet pleasures? Then to you may we speak of what your curiosity may be anxious to know; to you may we open a new view of life—a new source of knowledge. Come then with us, and let us survey this mimic world. Walk with us into our beautiful campus, where you may see not only the beauties of nature and art, but where you may contemplate the different stages of college life, from the primitive "Fresh" to the profound Senior; where the dignified Soph greets you with a "knowing wink," and the sedate and polished Junior with a smile and bow. And first we are led to contemplate the campus and buildings, before we enter into the minutiae of a college life. There stand "North," "East," and "West," whose imposing architecture attracts our notice first. From the belfry of old North our Alma Mater speaks to us in the brazen tones of the time-honored bell, whose notes "grate harsh discord," or combine in sweet harmony, as occasion summons us to, or releases us from, our studies. Next to the colleges we notice the halls of the Literary Societies, within whose walls genius has been nurtured, and from whose portals those have issued, who, having gained the esteem of their countrymen, now occupy places of high trust and honor, and who, by their influence, support with filial gratitude those walls which sheltered them while young. But it is not with these we would occupy

your time, or lessen your patience. A much better field of observation is opened to us in the various habits and characteristics of the different grades of the college course. For instance, if we commence, when we enter college, with the Fresh, we find him so deeply impressed with a *sense of his duty*, and so extremely thankful for being allowed so great a privilege as to join this Utopian state of society, as to his unenlightened and contracted vision it appears, that he will show his respect for the two next higher classes, and *reverence* for the highest, as well by his humble demeanor as by his profound bow and obeisance to his superiors. Again: the Soph, exulting in his newly-acquired dignities, and with memory of his wrongs as a Fresh still *fresh* (*lapsus pennæ*) in his recollection, gives vent to the exuberant flow of his spirits by deluding and misguiding the *only* class beneath him; and then enjoys a malicious satisfaction, when he sees the ludicrous errors into which they fall, as a natural consequence of adopting his wise counsel, as when an ill-fated mouse falls into the paws of a cat, and said cat amuses itself with the sufferings of its poor victim; and we must say, sympathy for the suffering of a fellow-creature induces us to side with the mouse. But the Junior, after having been convinced of the "error of his way" as a Soph, and benefiting also by his closer proximity to that "maximum" of college dignities and elevation, the *Senior Class*, thinks to tread the paths of literature and science with as much facility as he would "walk a log," and enjoy the society of the Muses without even the formality of an introduction. To this end he may be seen stepping along our beautiful walks, with a *folio* of small size under his arm, and a ratan of small dimensions in one hand, which he holds negligently, "as though he scarce deigned to grasp it." This ratan, and the "moustache," or "goatee," which he sports, are the connecting links between him and the dandy species; and though the latter would seem to be a *slight* connection, yet "it deceives its looks." And now we have reached the "ultima Thule" of college aspirations, the *Senior*. Here the mouse takes a different turn;

"To nobler themes sublimer strains belong."

Picture to yourself the perfection of knowledge, the essence of true dignity, the acme of propriety, and other good qualities, "too numerous to mention," all combined in one masterpiece of creation, and you have the object of reverence to the Fresh, of respect to the Soph, of admiration to the Junior—the *Seniors*. But if these different phases of college existence are each of them worthy of remark, much more does their intercourse with one another deserve our attention. In times of relaxation from study, the Fresh amuse themselves with those sports and pastimes which the fresh recollections of their schoolboy days suggest. The Juniors, engaged in the arduous task of sustaining their dignity, stand aloof from the rabble, and to all appearances seem to be contemplating, alternately, human nature and a new pair of boots. The Seniors, lost to all earthly things, may be supposed to be engaged with the study of the mind, or deep in metaphysics, until an unlucky stumble brings them to the level of their native dust, or plunges them wrong end foremost deep into that same dust, in a state of solution. But enough of this: and, kind, reader, if you are still with us, and your patience is not *quite* exhausted, we will strive to interest you with topics more worthy your consideration. But let us ask you, have we succeeded in engaging your interest in behalf of our noble institution, or has some malicious spirit whispered in your ear that it was all a joke? We pray you do not believe us capable of jesting on so serious a subject.

So far, then, we have addressed ourselves to our hearers at large, of all ages and

of either sex; and now we feel sure that neither the gallantry of the gentlemen, nor the modesty of the softer sex, will object to a distinction in favor of the ladies. We all respect, admire, and love the ladies. Their interests are our interests; and if it be the allotted portion of man to climb the steep ascent of fame, and to snatch honor from fickle Fortune's hand, theirs is the gentler, sweeter task to soften our grief, and to share our joys. Home influence is theirs; and the notes of "Home, sweet Home," as they fall in softened cadence upon the ear of the "sojourner in a strange land," owe their powerful and thrilling effect to the recollections which they awake of sisters and mothers dear. Particularly to the student are the ladies objects of interest. To them he is indebted for whatever charm the present possesses, or whatever bright anticipations the future suggests; and last, but *not least*, our sweet-hearts (God bless them!) are of their number. Then greeting to you, dear ladies: may your lot ever be a happy one, and may your faces ever wear a smile! But, in the sunshine of your prosperity and happiness, we pray you not to forget the poor student, nor exclude him from a share of that favor which is so omnipotent. Wield your *fans* in our cause, and in that cause do with them the same *execution* which you are wont to make when they are used in the support of your supremacy over the heart of man. Employ in our behalf those powers of sweet persuasion with which your sex is accustomed to soften sterner man, in his harshest moods, and at other times lead him tame and docile. Were we satisfied that we could enlist your efforts in our behalf, then indeed our task were finished, and we might commit the success and celebrity of our Magazine to your influence, and rest from our labors. And if we cannot engage your active assistance, we shall, at least, strive to merit your good-will, and win your approbation.

We must confess that it is with serious misgivings that we present to our readers the medley which composes the present Table; for although it may be supposed that in such a heterogeneous collection every one may find something to suit his taste, yet we sadly fear that altogether it must make an odious whole. And if there should be some feature in it which may not please the public eye, still we do not wish our Magazine to acquire its reputation piecemeal. Rather would we have it burst forth as a brilliant compound; and while its individual portions attract for themselves notice and secure attention, we would have the whole merit esteem and defy competition. As the old and honored College from which it derives support, and to which it owes its existence, stands on equal grounds with her sister institutions of the North, so we would have our Magazine stand forth through its native merits; and to that end *our* best endeavors have *not* been wanting. Here some cavilling mind may be ready to exclaim, "Your actions might better make that declaration than your words." It is not an appropriate time to tell us this. After standing alone thus far, unsupported by any thing but our own individual efforts, it may be justly presumed that we know what *action* is. Nevertheless, in answer to such a remark, we would say, that our action, as far as it will go, is ready; farther than that we trust the generosity of our friends will take "the will for the deed." Relying then on this trust more than any thing which our efforts may have accomplished, we offer to your tastes the present number of the Magazine, hoping that you will "judge lightly as you would be judged."

EDITOR.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

KIND friends, you who have aided us so much in the compilation of the present number, we return you our hearty thanks; and did we think our efforts to please

would succeed as well as yours, we would retire from this tripod with no compunctions of conscience. You have responded to our call with promptitude, and we hope you may acquire much honor for your highly literary productions.

There are some contributions lying upon our table which, after due deliberation, we have thought fit to suppress, for reasons many and various. The one from "*Jennie*," we read with great laughter, and must say it is the "richest production of the season." We would recommend to our friend "*Jennie*" to study the grammar a little more assiduously, and when *she* next makes her appearance, to have a dictionary close at hand. To "*Ned Harlington*" we will only remark, if he will tell us the point of his argument, (if such it could be called,) we will use our utmost endeavors to have it appear in the next number of the Magazine.

EXCHANGES.

THE Yale Literary, and Randolph and Macon, for October, and Georgia University, for November, are upon our table. Where are the others? Gentlemen, "hurry up the cakes."

We welcome to our sanctum the "*Ingleside*," a new periodical just started in New-York, and with pleasure add it to the list of our exchanges. The "*Ingleside*" is edited by Mrs. E. C. and Miss E. M. Beman, and published by Bunnell & Price, 121 Fulton street. The "*Ingleside*" is a "family paper, devoted to instruction and amusement." We received with it "an extra," in which it is stated that Mr. Samuel Beman is about to commence a "Chapter of American History," under the title of "The Philadelphia Conspiracy;" and he also states that he has discovered the authors of the celebrated "Newburg letters." We have perused the few chapters of this "conspiracy" contained in the last number; pronounce it at once a piece well worthy the perusal of all, and recommend it to the consideration of the students of this College and the citizens in general. Those wishing to subscribe, can do so by addressing (*post paid*) Mr. Samuel Beman, 49 Chambers street, New-York. Terms, \$2 per annum, payable in advance.